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By-Banathay, Bela H., Ed.

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The first half of the proceedings report is a transcript of the keynote address by Victor Hanzeli, and the second portion features remarks by other discussants, including Dwight Bolinger and James McClafferty. While Mr. Hanzeli's discussion centers on the relationship between linguistics and the language teacher, he offers background information on (1) the history and effectiveness of the audiolingual method, (2) the language skill learning order, native language use, and descriptivist-transformationist disputes, and (3) various other psychological learning theories. Additional remarks on these themes are offered, in less detail, by the other participants. (AF)

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1967 ANNUAL
MEETING OF ACTFL

Session on

Linguistics and The Language Teacher

Bela H. Banathy, Chairman
Defense Language Institute, W.C.

Report by:

Victor E. Hanzeli
University of Washington

Discussants:

Dwight Bolinger
Harvard University

James McClafferty
Foreign Language Innovative Curricula Studies
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Bela H. Banathy, Editor

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Introduction

Bela H. Banathy:

Welcome to this first meeting of ACTFL on Linguistics. The topic which we propose to discuss today has been in focus for many years. I suggest, however, that the professional discourse on this subject has never been more meaningful, more relevant, and even more needed that it is today.

Many of us believe that in our growth as a profession we have arrived at a point when we no longer are just recipients of information conveyed to us by the linguist, psychologist, and the anthropologist; we are not even just interpreters of findings generated by the source disciplines; but that we have reached the stage when we can evolve both the theoretical rationale and the practical procedures of our profession.

In order to be able to do this, we need to define on operational terms our relationship to our allied or source disciplines. Today - during this meeting - we will explore one of these relationships.

Professor Hanzeli of the University of Washington is our main speaker. He will discuss with us the relationship between Linguistics and the Language Teacher.

LINGUISTICS AND THE LANGUAGE TEACHER

Victor E. Hanzeli:

It is particularly appropriate to discuss the question of the relationship between linguistics and the language teacher at this present juncture. The creation of the new American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages has given us a new professional milieu, and the science of linguistics, now emerging rejuvenated with a new theory, provides the moment. The next few years will decide if language teachers are able and willing to avail themselves of these opportunities - whether or not they are a worthy race.

Besides being opportune, is such a re-examination necessary? I submit that it is - both theoretically and practically. Over the last twenty years, linguistics and language teaching have formed such strong bonds that thoroughgoing change in one must have some repercussion in the other, and we all owe to the intellectual side of our professional superego to examine this possibility.

On the practical side, our craft has been stagnating for the last five or six years and there are signs that the audio-lingual method, approved by the majority of American applied linguists, has been losing momentum. I commented recently in the Modern Language Journal[1] on the paucity of significant research in the field which, at least according to my prejudices, is indicative of stagnation. As far as my appraisal of the

situation of the audio-lingual method in the country is concerned, my opinion is admittedly subjective and based on hearsay evidence. Let us hope "hard evidence" is going to be available soon, but until then, we have to form our judgment by such indicators as the continued brisk sale of pre-audio-lingual textbooks and the re-emergence of the direct method. After a certain number of years of use, flaws have appeared in our methods. No college has reported a noticeable qualitative upsurge in the combined foreign language skills of entering freshmen, in spite of a concentrated national effort of long standing. There are rumblings in the professional journals, as well as "below deck." The shakedown cruise is certainly over now, and we must decide soon whether we content ourselves with a few superficial modifications, overhaul the ship, or sell it as surplus to an unsuspecting ally. Clearly I cannot answer this question fully in this paper, but I have raised it as a backdrop against which our original question - linguistics and the language teacher - comes into sharper focus.

What, in a nutshell, is the history of our problem? Let us examine it, concentrating on trends and attitudes, rather than facts, and specific documents. The latter are available in a number of careful monographs devoted to the history of the contribution of linguistics to language teaching, such as William Moulton's study.[2] Suffice it to say that our story begins in 1941, with the intensive language programs of the American Council of Learned Societies, converted, two years later, into the wartime Army Specialized Training Programs. These and

similar programs instituted by the other armed services fully mobilized the small number of professional linguists than available and involved them in the urgent task of language teaching. In these programs, a certain number of basic attitudes or leitmotives developed quite early: the primacy of speech, language learning as habit formation, de-emphasis of grammar rules, and rejection of translation.

After the war, linguists would have returned to their favorite Navajo field notes or artistic archiphonemes, had it not been for the fact that the world at large simply refused to settle back in conditions which prevailed before Pearl Harbor. America's involvement in the social upheavals in practically every corner of the world, and the race into which we entered with Russia after the launching of Sputnik, increased the pressure towards developing a thoroughly American, that is thoroughly efficient, technology of language teaching. The big foundations and the Federal government provided the resources all too willingly for the projects in this area.

It is at this point that the first signs of codification began to appear through the channels of the foreign language program of the Modern Language Association, the NDEA Institutes, and to some extent, the Center for Applied Linguistics. New tenets were added and some of the old ones modified. Since linguists are linguists after all, there was, during the 1950's a movement of return toward what could be called "applied grammar" in which basic sentences yielded their place to structural drills,

so arranged as to provide a pedagogical basis for inductive grammar. This trend was further refined and consolidated by the notion and practice of contrastive analysis.

If we find fault with these developments in retrospect, we should remember in all fairness that they also represent a long overdue reaction to pre-war methods and practices, specifically the defaitiste reading method and the unimaginative, routine use of the grammar-translation method.

The historical picture would not be complete if I failed to add that in the second half of the '50's, language teaching came under the combined influence of applied linguistics and the reinforcement theory of learning, with programmed learning as its technological corollary. In that decade, both linguistics and learning psychology were almost exclusively empirically oriented. This affinity was further reinforced by the technological match between the two fields. The descriptive linguists were preoccupied with segmentation and the segments they identified provided the perfect input into the technique of operant conditioning, where the production of small elements isolated by the linguist obtained happy reinforcement from the psychologist or his teaching machine. This seems to be such an ideal mating of two techniques and two theories that it is likely to survive together in language teaching far beyond the survival of the same theories and techniques within their own discipline.

Language teachers, by and large, have shown a remarkable, and indeed, a disturbing willingness to adopt any and all

procedures and recommendations which emanated from linguists and from gatherings of various language teaching specialists, among whom the linguists always assumed a position of authority. Thus, during our generation, linguists have inextricably involved themselves into the development of the audio-lingual method also known, rightly or wrongly, as the linguistic method. Recent protestations, feeble and few, of some linguists do not alter the fact that linguists have been active in the design and the polishing of the New Key, even if some have recently come to feel, as sorcerers' apprentices.

At this point we are still dealing with the happy 1950's, with 1950 B.C., Before Chomsky. (We will discuss later what happened A.D., After the Disestablishment.) In the process of application, the descriptive theory of the 1950's, currently referred to, sometimes pejoratively, as "taxonomic linguistics," was "overstretched" and distorted. Nevertheless, a certain canon of language teaching developed and was duly codified in such texts as Robert Lado's Language Teaching[3] or the still earlier report of the working committee of the 1962 Northeast Conference,[4] devoted to the impact of linguistics on language teaching.

Consider, among these distortions, if you wish, the question of the ordering of skills. Taking a purely descriptive point of view, and assuming the target language to be one used by a literate ethnic group, and assuming further that the learners are to acquire ultimately all language skills, there

is no linguistic reason why these skills should be taught separately, and in the canonical order of comprehending, speaking, reading and writing. It is generally accepted that language is a vocal system, and American descriptive linguists have long held that the grammars of given languages should be based on a systematic abstract representation of sound units. The phonetics and the graphemics of the language determine then what vocal and graphic representation are to be assigned to these units.

Presumably - and I know of no claim or theoretical limitation to the contrary - once a descriptive grammar is complete, including its graphemic component, there is no linguistic reason why the relationship between sounds and letters should be presented the "modern way" (sounds-to-letters) rather than the "traditional way" (letters-to-sounds). In other words, a set of rules which translates sounds into letters can be as precise, as exhaustive, as descriptively adequate, as a corresponding set of rules which translates letters into sounds. That is all that descriptive linguistic theory requires. Moving one step further, we can say that, even if we were to make the rather bold assumption that the teaching sequence should reflect the internal sequence of the descriptive grammar, we find no purely linguistic reasons for adopting the now traditional order of presentation and cultivation of the four skills.

Why, then, did we all agree that vocalizations should precede reading in the overall learning process of, let's say, Spanish, French or German? We had reasons, and perhaps even

good reasons, for adopting this strategy. In our psychologist's disguise, we analogized that this strategy duplicates the ideal, the "natural" order of first language learning. As pedagogues, we observed that spelling increased interference from the native language. As psychologists and pedagogues, we should also have considered that both the age of our students and the learning environment in which they operate tend to invalidate our analogy. We have also forgotten that by withholding a partially inconsistent spelling system, we have been depriving our students from the benefits of centuries of morphological and syntactic analysis that went into the writing systems of our languages. It is with this realization that Albert Valdman began his small crusade a couple of years ago to rehabilitate the French spelling system.[5] Others, like Sol Saporta pointed out that, if the teacher is blessed with a language, like German, which capitalizes its nouns, he should capitalize on it, not withhold it from his students.[6]

Thus the pros and cons of teaching sounds before letters are essentially pragmatic and, to some extent, psychological - not linguistic - and, incidentally, the experimental evidence provided by the psychologist is far from being conclusive either way.[7]

The question of inductive grammar presentation is also a purely pedagogical one. Since it may be connected with the question of how one learns one's own first grammar, let us for a moment suppose (we are still trying to apply the criteria of

linguistics as formulated in the 1950's) let us suppose that we can prove conclusively that the child learns grammar by observing individual utterances, and testing each mentally against all others for substitutability, likeness, and unlikeness - in other words, that the child learns by observation, imitation and analogy. Suppose we could prove all this (but the opposite is just as likely to happen) we should still not extrapolate as linguists that this is the only appropriate model for second-language learning or that it is more efficacious than others. There is no linguistic reason to assume that the model of grammar learning in the second languages should simulate the same in the first language.

At this particular table, the audio-lingual "methodist" wants to have his cake and eat it, too. On the one hand, he insists that the pedagogical grammar of the target language be genuinely contrastive, in other words, that it give full consideration to the learner's native grammar as well; on the other hand, he disallows the use of the native grammar in the actual learning process. He allows only observation and analogy based on the target language.

The situation is similar with respect to the avoidance of translation. Let us take a specific example. Unlike in English, the form of the possessive determiner in French is governed by the gender of the determined noun. Both <u>his book</u> and <u>her book</u> are <u>son livre</u>; both <u>his sister</u> and <u>her sister</u> are <u>sa soeur</u>. Contrastive analysis indicates and experience proves (or is it

the other way around?) that native speakers of American English will tend to use both son and sa in front of soeur or livre, depending on the syntactic connection. Audio-lingually, students should therefore be saturated with drills in which they associate soeur with sa, and livre with son. Then they are asked to summarize their behavior in a grammar rule which describes the French structure. The grammar rule presumably helps the student to understand what he was doing in the drills. If that be the case, why don't we allow the student to translate simply his and her sister as sa soeur and his and her book as son livre? Linguistically, nothing contrary to the truth would be spoken. Indeed it was the linguist's contrastive analysis which called the teacher's attention to the difficulty of these "parallel structures" in the first place. It is also undeniable that the students' understanding of the French structure would be enhanced by the translation. Why then do we shun translation? For reasons which may be good or bad, probably good, though; reasons which are psychological, pedagogical, pragmatic, commonsensical - but hardly linguistic.

Having considered the ordering of skills, the inductive approach to the teaching of grammar, and the use of translation, we begin to understand what Charles Ferguson, then Director of the Center for Applied Linguistics, meant in his talk to the 1966 Northeast Conference, acknowledging that "linguistics has very little to say directly to the questions of language pedagogy."[8]

Lest I be accused of quoting him out of context, he added that linguistics should nevertheless "have a special place in the education of language teachers"--a proposition with which most, if not all, of us will agree fully.

The trouble is that some linguists and many language teachers failed to take careful note of and heed the early warnings of such wise linguists as Ernst Pulgram who as early as in December 1958 wrote: "As linguists, we are, and we should be, loath to imitate the educationists and to commit their cardinal sin all over again, that is, to promise, or piously hope, or brazenly claim without ever being deterred by the most dismal results, that methods and teaching about teaching can take the place of hard knowledge of a subject, of the cold facts. Please do not ask us to dispense single items of useful information to be swallowed like aspirin for quick cure of pain and deficiency. Linguistics is a body of knowledge with which you must acquaint yourself as a whole, in as many details as you have time for, but always as a totality, as a system that is more than the mere sum of single parts. Do not ask us for a teaching prescription, listing a few linguistic ingredients as though it were a strudel recipe."[9]

Four years later, the situation was assessed in these words by Robert Stockwell, writing in the ACLS Newsletter: "Excessively strong claims have been made for linguistics, sometimes by cautious scholars, more often by bandwagon volunteers.

Linguistics is a struggling, imperfect discipline, with a certain amount of sense and a lot of nonsense to it. Humans made it too. By some language teachers, it is not taken seriously - instead, it is taken as gospel. By others, it is taken as unintelligible."[10]

By this time, however, American linguistics was in the process of theoretical re-orientation. Others, more flamboyantly, referred to this process as a scientific revolution. Whatever the intensity and depth of this phenomenon, we may safely say that American linguistics, since the 1957 publication of Noam Chomsky's Syntactic Structures, has been divided in two schools: the new transformational generative grammarians now oppose the descriptive or taxonomic linguists.

Applied linguists have responded to transformational generative grammar with the happy abandon of the eclecticist and generally failed to see the theoretical implications. (Their only excuse is that Chomsky's theory underwent rapid modifications during its first years of existence and that it still continues to develop in certain details.) A typical response appeared in the 1962 Northeast Conference Report which stated that "in transformational grammar, constructions are treated as 'transforms' of other constructions, and principles are set up whereby one sentence is derived from another...This procedure is by no means new; any experienced language teacher is familiar with exercises in which the student is told to change active into passive, etc."[11]

Robert Politzer in the March 1964 issue of the Modern Language Journal wrote in a similar vein: "Transformation...is, of course, an old pedagogical device which does not await the writing of transformational grammar."[12]

By now, however, it is clear that the two theories don't mix. The descriptivist is interested in items and the way items are arranged in actually observed sentences, the transformationist is interested in hidden processes and deep structures; phonology is what the descriptivist thrives on, syntax is the transformationist's favorite domain; mechanistic--mentalistic, sensualistic--intuitive, inductive--deductive,--all antonyms which reflect the two positions. Ultimately, and in a very real sense, the two schools represent, in the field of the study of language, the age old opposition between empiricism and rationalism.

It is therefore illusory to assume that the addition of a certain number of transformation exercises to the existing drills in an audio-lingual course will "streamline" it linguistically. Only few of the transformations found in a transformational grammar operate on actual observable phrases (called surface structures). For example, the rule that obtains in French when "Le médecin va venir" is changed into "Le médecin va-t-il venir?" is trivial. As Langacker pointed out in a recent article in Language,[13] this kind of rule is much less powerful than the set of rules which involves, in this order, reduplication, pronominalization and ellipsis. The output of the reduplication

rule in Langacker's set is not "Le médecin va-t-il venir?" but rather "Le médecin va-le médecin venir?" It is difficult to see how such rules could be converted into "transformation drills."

Among the applied linguists, Simon Belasco has sensed most keenly the problem which all applied linguists must face if they are interested in recent developments in linguistic theory. In his article on "Nucleation and the Audio-lingual Approach", he wrote: "A grammar that includes the two sentences John is easy to please and John is eager to please in a pattern drill--and stops there--is only concerned with surface structure. A grammar that follows up with transformation exercises, where John in the first sentence but not in the second sentence can be shown to be 'direct object' of please as in to please John is easy but not *to please John is eager is concerned with the deep structure..."[14] This statement is true as far as it goes, but note that Belasco has to use an asterisked form in order to refer to the kind of transformation exercises that would be required to display the deep structure of the language to be learned.

Some applied linguists have also assumed that the ordered rules found in a transformational grammar, would provide cues for the ideal internal organization of the pedagogical grammar of the same language. Saporta, in his review of Lado in Language, refuted this assumption and illustrated his case with the homely example that "one can learn how to use the brakes in a car before learning how to use the starter, and still end up

knowing how to drive."[15] As a matter of fact, if I can extrapolate from my own youngsters' experience, every American has years of reinforced practice in pumping the brakes on his father's car before he ever - I hope - turns on the ignition key. Both the unordered rules of the descriptivist and the ordered rules of the transformationist fail to serve as sure guides for the teacher who is concerned with the establishment of a teaching sequence.

We should ponder with particular care the following excerpt from Chomsky's Aspects of the Theory of Syntax. "A generative grammar is not a model for a speaker or a hearer. It attempts to characterize in the most neutral possible terms the knowledge of the language that provides the basis for actual use of the language by a speaker-hearer. When we speak of a grammar as generating a sentence with a certain structural description, we mean simply that the grammar assigns this...description to the sentence. When we say that the sentence has a certain derivation...we say nothing about how the speaker or hearer might proceed...to construct such a derivation. These questions belong...to the theory of performance"[16] and not to the theory of competence.

In other words, performance, the eminent domain of the language teacher, is ruled to be out of bounds for the transformationist, more specifically, it is relegated to a scientific limbo of random data, awaiting the formulation of a theory of performance.

Where transformational theory is in sharpest conflict with the "linguistic method" is in the latter's emphasis on drills. Under the heading "Linguistics and Drills" the 1962 Northeast Conference Report stressed that drills "should be provided in profusion"; that their main purpose is "to hammer home points of structural difficulty." As a matter of fact, "to enable the ordinary learner to establish a habit,...dozens of drills should be given for each new structural feature." Linguistic analysis provides teaching units for language laboratories which use them "for reinforcing and drilling patterns of language behavior."[17]

In contrast to this quote consider the following statement taken from Chomsky's talk to the 1966 Northeast Conference: "It seems to me impossible to accept the view that linguistic behavior is a matter of habit, that it is slowly acquired by reinforcement, association and generalization...Language is not a 'habit structure.' Ordinary linguistic behaviour characteristically involved innovation, formation of new sentences and new patterns in accordance with rules of great abstractness and intricacy."[18]

On the same occasion Chomsky, the founder and principal theoretician of one of the two major schools in American linguistics hinted at his own view of applied linguistics or of a linguistic method of teaching a language in the following terms: "It is difficult to believe that either linguistics or psychology has achieved a level of theoretical understanding that might

enable it to support a technology of language teaching."[19]

At this point, we seem to have reached an impasse. We have found that excessive claims have been made by advocates of the audio-lingual method as to the linguistic bien-fondé of their approach, while another important group of linguists question their own ability or preparedness to support language teaching. Under these conditions, can we blame the language teacher for being confused, bewildered and discouraged? Better yet, can we find a way out of the confusion? Are we wise enough to learn by our own mistakes? I believe that we are.

Linguists have already learned from the internal upheavals within their own discipline. They are increasingly cautious in discussing applied or pedagogical matters. They are more and more reluctant to hand out strudel recipes. They may still like strudel, but they have learned that consumers are likely to take their favorite recipes for scientific formulas. Those who have always had a serious commitment to applied linguistics will go on with their work and talented young linguists will join their ranks. Together they will continue speaking up on pedagogical matters, carefully distinguishing in their statement that which is the fruit of their studies as linguists from that which is prompted by their experience as language teachers and practical classroom psychologists.

Teachers will have to change their attitudes perhaps even more profoundly vis-à-vis linguistics. First of all they must

cultivate linguistics sincerely and seriously. After all, linguistics is the only field of study which is capable of offering them a theory and a body of knowledge on the nature of what they propose to teach--language--as well as analyses of individual languages. Once the teacher has fulfilled this obligation, he alone, with his peers in professional council, should decide upon his teaching method, materials and strategy. As Ferguson said, linguistics has little to say directly about language pedagogy. Indirectly, that is through the teacher, linguistics cannot but shape what goes on in a language classroom.

The intelligent use of professional independence (which carries its own burdens and responsibilities) requires a regular periodic re-examination of one's activities, individually and collectively. Therefore individual teachers owe themselves to study current developments in linguistics, not in the hope of finding in them immediate answers to specific teaching questions, but because it will further their understanding of the subject matter they teach.

The teachers who are critical about the way they teach and do not merely follow an approved method will find, in their readings, that not only linguistic theory has changed lately, but psychological evidence has also been accumulated which tends to invalidate the doctrinaire use of the audio-lingual method.

Wilga Rivers' careful and highly accessible study, The Psychologist and the Foreign-Language Teacher, published in 1964, already put a damper on the early Skinnerian enthusiasm.

She emphasized the importance of motivation and emotional conditioning. To promote the latter, "both pattern drill and language laboratory practice should be auxiliary and subordinate to practice in natural, face-to-face situations contrived in the classroom, in a relaxed atmosphere, where the student feels free to express himself on subjects associated with his everyday life, and that of his fellow students." She also warned that "whereas repetition is useful in establishing a response, 'overlearning' can fixate stereotyped responses, reduce the students' ability to select among possible alternatives."[20] She questioned the principle that students should always be induced to give the right response. What seems to be more important is that the student be given choices, and that the right responses be rewarded, and the wrong ones be promptly extinguished.

More recently yet, in Trends in Language Teaching, John B. Carroll summarized other findings which seem to contradict current practices in the audio-lingual method. He found that "the frequency with which an item is practiced per se is not so crucial as the frequency with which it is contrasted with other items with which it may be confused." Furthermore "the more meaningful the material to be learned, the greater the facility in learning and retention." It was also found that "in learning a skill, it is often the case that conscious attention to its critical features and understanding of them will

facilitate learning." Carroll concluded in words we should remember as we approach our own conclusions: "Actually, what is needed more than research is a profound rethinking of current theories of foreign language teaching in the light of contemporary advances in psychological and psycholinguistic theory. The audiolingual habit theory...is no longer abreast of recent developments. It is ripe for revision, particularly in the direction of joining with it some better elements of the cognitive code-learning theory. I would venture to predict that if this can be done, then teaching based on the revised theory will yield a dramatic change in effectiveness."[21]

This process of rethinking has already started under the impetus of transformational generative grammar. Chomsky's "theory of competence" is now as solidly established as scientific theories ever will be. We know what grammar is and we can begin looking for a theory that will explain how it is learned and used--a theory of performance. As Jerrold Katz pointed out in an article on "Mentalism in Linguistics,"[22] the theory of competence has logical precedence over a theory of performance, but this priority does not mean that the attempt to answer questions on language performance and language learning must wait for a full answer to a complete grammar and definition of language; rather it means that substantive contributions towards an answer to what grammar is must be made available in order that attempts to answer questions of performance and learning can begin.

As a matter of fact, the first tentative but encouraging bits of experimental evidence have begun to trickle in, showing how grammar is learned and used. One demonstrated that time required for sentence understanding increases as the number of grammatical transformations is increased. Other experimenters report that distinctive phonological features and syntactic boundaries in English have specific psychological correlates.[23]

Recent case studies indicate that first-language learning is not all imitation cum analogy. As Eric Lenneberg pointed out, "the first things that [children learn] are principles--not items: principles of categorization and pattern perception. The first words refer to classes, not unique objects or events... From the beginning, very general principles of [phonology,] semantics and syntax are manifest."[24]

As a result of new psycholinguistic and linguistic evidence, we are now in the presence of two concepts of language learning which, by analogy, could be called the piano concept and the chess concept. In learning to play the piano the customary procedure is first to learn to manipulate simple sequences of notes produced by a few fingers and with one hand only, then to proceed towards the playing of more difficult exercises. Ultimately these skills and some concomitant understandings add up to the playing of real pieces. This is essentially the audio-lingual approach. The transformationists view the learning of a language as one resembling the playing of a game, like chess. In chess it would be downright silly to teach individual moves

separately such as merely moving a pawn back and forth for the first lesson. You do not practice moving the knight according to a certain pattern. The only thing that counts in chess is the interrelationship of the moves, the way one move generates another within the overall rules of the game which have to be understood.

What the language teacher wants to know, whether these two concepts may be reconciled. Is there room for eclecticism? I do not believe that there is room for the kind of tactical eclecticism I discussed above according to which you take the audio-lingual method and add to it an increased number of transformation exercises. But there may be a strategic eclecticism which seems to be implicit in a remarkable article by Moshe Anisfeld, published in Valdman's Trends in Language Teaching.[25]

Anisfeld views language as divided into two components: specific habits and general rules. In the first category falls mainly the lexicon of the language, including words, phrases, and idioms; in the second, grammar. "The essential difference between the two categories arises in the degree of extendibility of the known to new situations. Knowing that in English a particular piece of furniture is referred to as chair does not provide information for inferring what the word would be for another piece of furniture, table, for example; but the structure of the sentence, This is a chair, is generalizable to This is a table." Although this is "not an absolute matter, but a relative comparison," it would seem that "the acquisition of specific habits

can be explained partly by associative rote learning principles,"[26] by specific drills, while the learning of the rules will probably imply another attack. We don't know yet what this attack might be. At any rate, Sol Saporta writing in the same volume argued very convincingly that, by definition, drills cannot teach rules.[27]

While linguistics and psychology are moving along the lines I indicated, the intelligent language teacher will not merely cultivate his skepticism by looking at evidence which tends to invalidate accepted ideas and procedures. He will take an equally critical look at new findings along new paths in a positive sense.

As a matter of fact, teachers could become full-fledged partners in prospecting along the new frontiers of linguistics and language learning psychology by systematically observing, then studying, how people learn foreign languages. This kind of research is sorely needed. For generations we have been observing children learning their first language. We have expended a great deal of effort in studying the teaching of languages. We have also measured time and time again, with sophisticated and costly instruments, the skills displayed by students <u>after</u> the learning has presumably taken place. But what happens between the teacher's lesson and the examination? How do students actually learn? And I don't mean how they learn dialogs, skits, drills, reading passages, translation

or anything of that sort. But how do they learn, because some of them do, Spanish, German or French? This is the question we know the least well how to answer, yet I know of no other of equal importance to the language teacher.

The informed, critically minded, independent teacher who strives for the intellectual mastery of his subject matter and for an increased understanding of the nature of his students' learning will not only instinctively reach for linguistics, but he will actually contribute to it. Their relationship will be clearcut, unquestioned, respectable and beneficial for all: teachers, students and linguists.

I sincerely hope that the new American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages will promote, not a method, but a professional atmosphere in which these attitudes can flourish, and that it will sponsor gatherings of teachers and scholars in which the necessary reassessment of applied linguistics can take place.

NOTES

1. LI (1967), 183-185.

2. "Linguistics and Language Teaching in the U.S., 1940-1960," Trends in European and American Linguistics, edited on the occasion of the IXth International Congress of Linguists by Christiane Mohrman et al. (Utrecht: Spectrum, 1961) pp. 82-109.

3. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964.

4. "Working Committee I: Linguistics and Language Teaching," 1962 Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, ed. W. F. Bottiglia, pp. 2-17.

5. See A. Valdman, "Not All is Wrong with French Spelling," French Review, XXXVII (1963), 213-223.

6. "Applied Linguistics and Generative Grammar," Trends in Language Teaching, ed. Albert Valdman (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 85.

7. Cf. op. cit., p. 86, n. 1.

8. "Applied Linguistics," 1966 Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, ed. R. G. Mead, p. 50.

9. Quoted, with slight omissions, from the French Review, Dec. 1958.

10. XIII (1962), no. 8, p. 2.

11. p. 11.

12. XLVII (1964), 150.

13. Ronald W. Langacker, "French Interrogatives," Language, XLI (1965), 589.

14. MLJ, XLIX (1965), 489.

15. Language, XLI (1965), 549.

16. (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1965), p. 9.

17. Pp. 11-12.

18. 1966 Northeast Conference, pp. 43-44.

19. Loc. cit.

20. (The University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 40, 67.

21. "Psychology, Research and Language Teaching," Trends in Language Teaching, pp. 104-106.

22. In Readings in the Psychology of Language, ed. L. A. Jakobovits and M. S. Miron (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967), pp. 73-84.

23. Cf. op. cit., pp. 181-185.

24. "A Biological Perspective of Language," New Directions in the Study of Language, ed. E. H. Lenneberg (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1966), p. 66.

25. "Psycholinguistic Perspective on Language Learning," Trends in Language Teaching, pp. 107-120.

26. Op. cit. pp. 108, 118.

27. Op. cit., p. 90.

Bela H. Banathy:

Our first discussant is Professor Bolinger of Harvard University.

Dwight Bolinger:

The facts in Mr. Hanzeli's paper are solidly arrayed and I do not attempt to dispute them. I question only one point that seems to me to be a non-sequitur: the newer linguists dissolve their partnership with language teaching until further notice, yet language teachers ought to keep on studying linguistics.

Mr. Hanzeli reports the facts correctly; it is the linguists who are to blame for the inconsistency. From being credited with a virtual proprietorship, they now pass to the opposite extreme of pretending that linguistics may have no relevance at all. We deserve an explanation of this sudden modesty: that it comes from a conception of linguistics as linguistic theory and of language teaching as <u>how</u> one teaches rather than <u>what</u>; and since no one knows how the theory can benefit the techniques, it follows that "linguistics" is not necessarily pertinent to "language teaching." This narrow definition ignores the contributions, not of theory but of substance, that linguistics has made and will continue to make; most notable are the descriptions of languages not previously taught, which could not be taught without them; also worthy of note is the emphasis on parts of language previously passed over in our teaching

materials, especially such matters as rhythm and intonation. But even allowing the focus on theory, it is wrong to play coy about certain rather unmistakable implications in the theory itself. One is the tendency toward a renewed intellectualization of language-learning, which is now reversing a trend of many years' standing. Another is the necessary connection between any style of linguistic description that claims to represent psychological processes, and the learning of the subject to which those processes lead: so long as linguistic description is not purely ethereal as well as theoretical, in some sense the orderings that it prescribes and the transformations that it posits must be reflected in the ways in which a language is taught. We may be noncommittal for the moment about what those ways will turn out to be, but a monkish skepticism about secular applications is foolish.

Above all, the language classroom is a proving ground. Science is never pure. One of the tests of the rightness of a theory is whether it leads to improvements in the applied field most closely related to it. The linguist should look for tests as diligently as the teacher looks for principles. Teaching and theory are a two-way street.

The above is a condensation of the original statement, which will be expanded into a full-length article to be published separately.

Bela H. Banathy:

Our second discussant is Mr. McClafferty of the Foreign Language Innovative Curricula Studies of Ann Arbor, Michigan.

James McClafferty:

Let me begin by agreeing on the major views which Professor Hanzeli has noted - the need for cooperation and communication among linguists and language teachers, and the need for criticism of accepted methods and materials. He has taken his own advice and the result is some penetrating insights into our present difficulties in language instruction.

I shall continue by raising some questions which the paper just read has stimulated me to ask. First, how can we prepare ourselves to understand that teachers must take more responsibility for what is done in classrooms? Like many other teachers, I have traveled the road to Damascus more than once and I need to rationalize, in the good sense of that infinitive, all that retreading. I do it now, as follows: no theory or allied technology, i.e., method, whether from a pedagogical, psychological, linguistic or other source or combination of these has demonstrated its effectiveness with a significant population of language students. Therefore, it remains the task of teachers to diagnose the problems and prescribe the language courses in their instructional arena. This seems somewhat different from Hanzeli's conclusion that teachers can help psychologists

identify how students do indeed learn language. At present, I confess I do not see how teachers can do either, since they have little power to affect the curriculum itself.

I was interested by Dr. Banathy's reference in his introduction to [redacted] the development of a theory of instruction. I hope that he will develop that topic. Its repercussions for this paper and for language teaching materials interest me for several reasons. Of the major variables, in the instructional event, materials design has recently been greatly affected by findings in linguistics and although materials are no longer simple lists of drills, even the newer materials are heavily structured by linguistic exigencies. The results of using such materials, and the calling into question of some of the principles of structural linguistics, and for other reasons cited below, it seems that a new direction is appropriate. Some suggested criteria are listed below.

Effective materials for foreign language instruction should involve concepts and activities appropriate to the age levels of the students. Cultural authenticity and referential content of the materials used must be valid and stimulating. Therefore, linguistic data, no matter how important, must be built into a set of curriculum tasks which have meaning for those who engage in them. This is to say that foreign language students need a classroom in which the conceptual and communication skills appropriate to their age level are the content which supplies the

lexical sets out of which the linguist and the teacher and other members of the curriculum team develop the sine qua non of successful foreign language instruction - materials which offer substantive as well as formal challenges, which lead the student carefully to behavioral goals, which cumulate, review his learning and are at least somewhat synthesized with other academic and vocational studies.

The major point which I should like to make is that linguistic knowledge is only one important variable among a number. The usefulness of linguistics in language teaching has been demonstrated. However, the amount, the rate of application, the method, and especially the mix of linguistics with other variables remain unknown. This holds, it seems to me, for a number of levels of learning and for many varieties of student populations.

Bela H. Banathy:

Ladies and Gentlemen. Your questions and comments are now invited. If you wish to direct your question to one of the speakers, please so indicate.

Edward Matkovick:

I have one comment to make. The responsibility for developing better learning situations belongs to both the psychologist and the teacher. This ties in with what Mr. Hanzeli had to say. I should hope that the psychologist would have a very strong look at the classroom; and the teacher's responsibility would be to recognize errors in whatever area they exist. I wouldn't expect the teacher to make the analysis, whether it's the matter of perception or whether it's the matter of discovery, as part of the learning process. It seems that we are too much setting our sights on the objective of teaching, and very little on the objective of whether our children are learning. Therefore, on the basis of cooperation between the classroom teacher and the psychologist, we should be able to devise a method which will help our students to conceptualize, instead of smothering them with more verbalization and all sorts of other concerns.

James R. Powers:

First, I'd like to express my appreciation for the treatment of theory for the foreign language teacher; I think that's what we're really getting at here. I'm sure every teacher has some interest in theory, and perhaps anything that would help to focus on theory and help to make it explicit for the teacher is important because it is according to a theory, even implicit, that he selects his materials.

I think some of our difficulties come from the concepts of language. If, as we agree, language is process, then it becomes difficult to draw the line between language and language learning. Some of the linguists, it seems to me, have gotten into considerable discussion about language learning, probably not intentionally. Perhaps these arguments are impossible to avoid.

I do feel, too, that Carroll probably did a disservice by emphasizing the difference between the "cognitive code-learning theory" and the "audio-lingual habit theory." Is there really a dichotomy here? Teachers who have used any audio-lingual method always advocated not only the development of habits, but also the practice of variation and creative expression. To say that audio-lingual teaching consists of no more than the development of habits by imitation is quite wrong, unfair. On the other hand, the cognitive code-learning people would say that you really have to learn the rules of the language game before you can talk, according to Carroll's formulation. I'm not sure that they do this, although Chomsky, Bruner, and company distinguish

between linguistic competence and performance. The generative transformational grammar people say these are not equal; we, as language teachers, know that they are not equal. In the past, we have developed youngsters who had some competence, who knew some rules, but who were not capable of performance.

Bela Banathy:

I wish to join in the discussion on the issue of theories. In doing so I intend to respond to Mr. McClafferty's suggestion that I clarify what I said about theory in my introduction. Theories are generalizations and predictions about phenomena. For a theory to be adequate and useful its generalizations must stand the test of empirical observation of the phenomena about which one theorizies; and the predictions made must be proven to be valid. In our profession we are concerned with having available to us adequate theories of foreign language curriculum and foreign language instruction. We need a curriculum theory on which base we can design functional curriculums and we need a theory of instruction which can be tested in the classroom. As Mr. Bolinger said earlier, "teaching and theory are a two-way street."

In an applied field - like language teaching - we are concerned with different kinds of theories. As we evolve our

theory of foreign language curriculum or instruction, we need to know about theories which the linguists have formulated about language; we need to know theories of learning as described by the psychologists; and the theories of language learning as formulated by the psycholinguists. There are two comments which should be made here. The first is that a theory of foreign language instruction is neither deduced nor is it inductively generated from the theories constructed by these different disciplines. As one theorizes about foreign language instruction, one explores relevant theoretical statements made by the linguist, psychologist, anthropologist, and psycholinguist. (One can establish relevance only if one knows the phenomenon to which to relate.)

The integration of data gained from an exploration of theories of relevant disciplines can be accomplished by the use of models. The process of educational theory construction was described in detail by George and Elizabeth Maccia in their papers published by the Educational Theory Center of Ohio State. The second comment which I wish to make is that the construction of theories of foreign language curriculum and instruction is within the domain of those who are involved in foreign language education. We should not expect that this will be done for us by others. To evolve and maintain an adequate and useful theory in the foreign language field is a responsibility which is within the purview of the foreign language teaching profession.

G. del Olmo:

Although, by and large, I do not disagree with the main points that Mr. Hamzeli has made, I find this presentation somewhat out of balance: Full justice is done to the subject of linguistics, but not enough is said about linguistics in the context of language teaching and language learning. It seems to me that sometimes, such as on this occasion, we concentrate so much on an aspect of a subject that we may unwittingly create a false impression; for instance, that the aspect dealt with is the decisive factor when the subject is viewed in the full context where it rightfully belongs. If I did not know any better, after listening to this paper I would be under the impression that to me, as a language teacher, which school of linguistics I choose to follow ought to be a matter of the utmost concern, and that my professional success or failure would indeed depend upon making the right choice.

The first two chapters of William Bull's Spanish for Teachers: Applied Linguistics should be called to the attention of teachers of all languages. Although I would not go so far as agreeing with Professor Bull that the choice of method "has been the irrelevant variable in over half a century of experimentation," he makes the important point that "there is no necessary correlation between the grammarian's analysis and the way a language is learned." Basing myself mostly on Professor Bull's first chapter, I would approximate the full context mentioned above by means of a listing such as this:

1. The entire teaching-learning situation.

2. The learner, his qualifications (motivation, language aptitude, intelligence), and the nature of the problem he faces.

3. The teacher, his qualifications, the nature of the problem he faces, and his insights into the psychology of language learning.

4. Teaching methodology and choice of textbook. The methods and techniques that tend to emphasize one aspect of learning or another. No single method of narrow scope and dogmatic, rigid views can do justice to language learning.

5. The effectiveness and efficiency with which the teacher does his job. His ability to test for what has been taught and to evaluate critically the learning that has taken place. His ability to foster student motivation.

6. The time factor and the size of the class. The availability of a language laboratory and the teacher's ability to make effective use of it.

7. A clear definition of objectives as a function of time and in terms of structure, lexicon, behavior, and standards of performance.

8. The basic linguistic information and how it is presented. Linguistic theory and the relationship between linguistic knowledge and teaching procedures.

My point is that any of these factors, there may be others, can decisively distort the process of foreign language acquisition.

It is important not to lose sight of the perspective these factors provide.

The second point I would like to make is that in everyday practice talk about an audiolingual method or an audiolingual approach has become simply irrelevant or meaningless. On the one hand, we find every-where, in schools and colleges, many members of the profession who regard themselves as audiolingual teachers. A visit to their classrooms reveals, however, a total lack of understanding of the basic principles involved as well as lack of acquaintance with the practical applications of these basic principles and the specific techniques needed to implement them. It can truly be said of these teachers that their classroom practices belie their professional personas.

There are, on the other hand, teachers who in practice do justice to the really fundamental principles of audiolingual teaching, but who cannot recognize their practices and beliefs in the audiolingual canon presented by some writers. In The Psychologist and the Foreign-Language Teacher, Wilga M. Rivers has presented her version of the audiolingual canon according to "The Sources." Her book constitutes a welcome contribution to the bibliography on language teaching, and it contains a great deal of useful and timely information. But in her codification of the audiolingual canon, Miss Rivers fails to do justice to the enlightened audiolingual practitioner. Somehow we are left with the impression that Miss Rivers has set up an audiolingual straw man (always according to the unimpeachable

Sources) who becomes by accretion such a perfect embodiment of the Audiolingual Canon that he is nowhere to be found. In A Psycholinguistic Experiment in Foreign-Language Teaching, George A. C. Scherer and Michael Wertheimer also attempted to summarize the essence of audiolingual teaching. Again, the description fails to do justice to the practices of teachers that I would not hesitate to call audiolingual, but who give a very qualified support, or altogether reject, some of the tenets and specific practices of the audiolingual canon that the authors of these two books present. The moral of the story seems to be that The Audiolingual Method simply does not exist. A genuine audiolingual approach to teaching is something dynamic, protean, and evolving. Above all, it should be viewed as a psycholinguistic hypothesis on the nature of language teaching and language learning, which is constantly undergoing a process of development and refinement. Mrs. Rivers' description of The Audiolingual Method is not successful, but she succeeds in contributing to the development of the audiolingual approach to language teaching.

In 1899, long before Skinner, Fries and Chomsky, Henry Sweet published his book The Practical Study of Languages. For close to seventy years now, the academic establishment--mostly the teachers of French, German, Italian, and Spanish--has seen fit to disregard Sweet's valuable insights into the nature of language teaching and language learning. This fact ought to give us pause when we feel inclined to overemphasize theoretical and

methodological differences of opinion. If by some miracle the profession as a whole were to do full justice to the implications of Sweet's book, it would take a giant stride that would put it a full half century ahead of where it now stands. What I am suggesting is that we must beware of getting lost in the latest controversies. There is a lot to be done with regard to policy decisions at the local level, teacher training at every level, testing, and evaluation of language learning. The profession must make significant progress on all these fronts before it can do justice to what we now begin to know about the nature of language and methodology.

Far too often we foreign language teachers engage in pointless polemics about methods, without stopping to think that the only real and basic issue is a matter of high standards in teaching and of high standards in the evaluation of the learning that results from our teaching. Good teaching is teaching that produces results in terms of clearly defined objectives; good teaching is teaching that evaluates the objectives attained by means of reliable and valid tests. If we practice good teaching, if we have a clear notion of objectives, and if we know how to measure achievement, we shall also find ways to make use of the contributions that psycholinguistics has to offer. Our paramount concern as language teachers must be to put our house in order and to make certain that we are not hiding our professional inadequacies and low standards for teaching and for learning by engaging in futile polemics.

In deference to Mr. Hanzeli, it must be clearly understood that the above paragraph does not allude to his paper, since I am far from considering it a contribution to the pointless polemics I have in mind. I base these reflections on my acquaintance with the profession of which I am a member. They are meant to contribute to providing a context in which to do full justice to Mr. Hanzeli's lucid presentation of a topic of vital concern to language teachers.

Jack Richardson:

I would like to offer a rejoinder here, and some support for the point of view that the language teacher, like every effective teacher, is always an eclecticist of sorts, and will always - I should hope - follow Alexander Pope's exhortation, "Be not the first to cast the old aside; be not the last by whom the new is tried," and could indeed have profited from Sweet, or from Fries, or from Aristotle, whose taxonomy simply said that how we think is how we classify. Well, the point is simply this, that you always begin with not where you are and not what you know about Spanish or French or Latin or Swahili or Nootka, you begin with where the child is and find out more about the way he learned his first language, English, in order to capitalize on where you can lead him onward and upward. This is a simple restatement of the theory of the transfer of knowledge, which grows by geometrical progression, beginning at some point.

Victor Hanzeli:

Of course, when you talk about any method, or its adequacy, you must make an abstraction...We all know that no one simply hands out whatever is printed in a book or given in a set of recorded tapes. However, if you look back to various courses and curricula built around the audio-lingual method, you are going to find that although the need to cultivate creativity is acknowledged, there are always warnings to the teacher that it was not enough to drill, but you had to go beyond this with variation drills, etc. The fact remains that the apparatus itself reflected more the discrete patterns rather than the creative variation type of activity. For this there is a very simple reason: it is easy to design a pattern drill from the first sentence to the last. It is impossible to predict what will happen in a creative give-and-take in a classroom. So perhaps what we really worry about - those of us who do - is the below-average language teacher who would use the materials as they are. The package as it exists has a certain built-in emphasis, and that's what we are worrying about.

Eric Bauer:

I would like to refer to Dr. Bolinger's statement: "Before it makes any sense at all, it must make pedagogical sense." I would like to suggest an extension of this statement and make it a general principle: if applied linguistics makes any sense, it must make pedagogical sense, meaning specifically how do we utilize linguistic knowledge for pedagogical purposes when we are concerned with the structuration of an elementary course. We must ask ourselves whether we should primarily be concerned with linguistic findings, linguistic stratgies, or whether we should organize our whole approach, our strategy, primarily according to pedagogical and even other criteria such as sociolinguistic or social. In this connection I would also like to refer to Pike's analysis of linguistic utterances beyond the sentence level, which includes social, rhetorical and other factors as well. Just to give one example: I attempted to revise the analysis and subsequent teaching-strategy of the strong verbs in the German language for American speakers. We should not be concerned with the famous seven groups at all if we can find better ways to organize certain processes of sound change e.g. from the present to the past participle (and in the reverse). Past action in spoken German is most frequently expressed in a compound tense form and not in the simple past. So the "traditional" categorization "present - simple past - past participle" is a purely grammatical and theoretical categorization

which does not reflect the most frequent transformation process in oral expressions of past actions. We need to learn the past participle in a contextual approach based on categorizations which make sense according to the demands made by the social situation as well as the pedagogical situation. Our students need to learn these two forms through an approach which is meaningful to them. In doing this we can make use of a transfer principle, a transfer of learning principle, building upon a feature as it appears in English (e.g. the stem vowel is retained in such verbs as fall - fallen; German "fallen - gefallen" or otherwise the stem vowel changes in a similar or contrastive way in English). There are at least three processes which can thus be compared in both languages such as the /ai/-/i/ group (ride - ridden, "reiten - geritten"), the /i:/-/o/ group (freeze - frozen, "frieren - gefroren") and the contrastive /i/ - /a/ vs. /i/ - /u/ group (drink - drunk, "trinken - getrunken"). We should attempt to orient our linguistic analysis and the teaching program according to such criteria, rather than ordering them according to principles of formal grammar. Linguistics, specifically contrastive applied linguistics, might then make better pedagogical sense.

Bela H. Banathy:

Our meeting today has demonstrated rather well the advancement that our profession has made toward self-determination. The presentations and discussions have documented our ability to conceptualize and define functional relationships and interaction between our field and other relevant disciplines.

Foreign language education is a complex endeavor. Many disciplines feed information into it; and we need to know clearly when to listen, to whom, for what kind of information. We need to analyze the information gained, interpret it, and use it as input data in the construction of theoretical bases upon which to build our curriculum design and instructional strategies.

In closing, I know I am speaking on behalf of all present when I thank our speaker, our discussants, and those who commented, for their participation.